

# Executive Summary

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***When we build, let us think that we  
build forever.***

***John Ruskin***

The Governor's Permanent Residence Commission (Commission) was formed after Senate Bill 1091 (Ortiz, Chapter 732, Statutes of 1999) was signed into law in October of 1999. This measure, containing an urgency clause, required the nine-member Commission to consider available sites within the City of Sacramento in the general vicinity of the State Capitol for the construction of an official residence for the Governor of the State of California. There is no question about the need for the Residence -- strong bi-partisan support within the Legislature, public sentiment, and statewide editorials have all endorsed the effort. However, finding a suitable location has been challenging and involved extensive analysis of over 30 possible sites. While some Commissioners hold another view, the Governor has stated that he will not support the use of public funds to build the Governor's Residence.

Over an eight-month period, the Commission met nine times and issued a Preliminary Report on January 1, 2000. It reviewed 36 potential sites with significant input from the Department of General Services and the California Highway Patrol, Governor's Protective Detail. All sites, except for the four analyzed in the report, were removed from consideration due to significant security, community, or architectural concerns. Because SB 1091 specifically



required consideration of sites within the City of Sacramento, the Commission was focused on sites within the Capitol Area. The feasibility of other locations is not addressed in this report.

This report provides the Legislature with detailed information regarding the following four State-owned sites:

- **The Legislative Office Building (LOB)**  
(10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, N & O Streets)
- **The Employment Development Department Headquarters (EDD)**  
(8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, Capitol Mall & N Streets)
- **The future Department of Transportation office building site (DOT)**  
(11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, P & Q Streets)
- **The Food and Agriculture Headquarters and Annex (Food & Agriculture)**  
(12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, N & O Streets)

The Commission voted, 5 to 4, to recommend two of the above sites for further consideration to the Legislature:

- The Legislative Office Building (LOB) site
- The Employment Development Department Headquarters site

The four dissenting Commissioners did not want to recommend any of the sites, but rather forward all of the four sites for informational purposes.

This report contains the following research and findings:

- **Background**

California, which has the seventh largest economy in the world, is one of only six states that does not have an official Residence for the Governor. A survey of nine comparable states and information on the official Governors' residences reveals that the majority of



these homes range in size between 22,000 and 30,000 square feet.

- **Interviews with First Ladies**

The First Ladies interviewed for this report indicated that the Residence should provide a certain level of family privacy, as well as an entertainment area separated from the private living quarters. One First Lady stressed the importance of providing public space and tours of portions of the Residence. Several of the First Ladies expressed concerns about a Residence being located near the Capitol and in an environment that they felt was not “a family setting.” All of the First Ladies agreed that California should have a Residence that provides a gracious setting for official entertainment, while allowing an element of privacy for California’s First Family.

- **Security**

The Governor’s Protective Detail, a division of the California Highway Patrol, reviewed each of the sites considered by the Commission and provided a security rating based on specific criteria. These ratings are contained in the Security and Protective Services section of this report. In general, urban sites pose significantly more risks than residential settings; however, transportation time is also a key security factor. From a security standpoint, urban settings are especially problematic due to heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic, as well as the proximity of tall buildings, which pose a “look down” threat. It is considerably more difficult for officers to spot abnormal or peculiar activity in areas with heavy traffic or activity.

According to the Governor’s Protective Detail, each of the four sites has significant security issues. The EDD and DOT were given a Level Three security rating (posing at least three significant security risks that may or may not be corrected or overcome). The LOB site was rated a Level Four (posing significant risks for the Governor’s Protective Detail and would





require major design concessions if the site was selected). The Food & Agriculture site was rated a Level Five because it has insurmountable security problems.

- **Costs**

The Commission considered complex and, in some cases, significant cost factors that make some sites within the Capitol Area extremely expensive. Of the four sites reviewed, the DOT site is the least expensive to develop. The EDD location would present the most significant costs due to demolition, relocation of employees, and provision of new office space. In addition, there would be significant costs for repayment of the Federal government's ownership interest in the building. However, the three sites that have aging buildings are likely to be renovated at a significant cost to the State within the next decade. In determining costs, these expensive renovations should be considered as major mitigating cost factors.

- **Architectural Analysis**

Each site was evaluated by the consulting architect, Paul Neel. The most architecturally desirable site was the LOB, which poses significant cost and security issues. The EDD site was architecturally desirable, but would be the most expensive site to develop. The DOT site was considered one of the least architecturally desirable and was determined to be "marginal" by the consulting architect. The Food & Agriculture site was considered to be architecturally inadequate. Both the LOB and the Food & Agriculture sites are on the California Register of Historical Resources and use of the sites for a Governor's Residence is opposed by some historical preservationists.



- **Loss of State Office Space**

A key factor that must be considered in the selection of any of these sites is the loss of State office space, a priority that has been well established by the Legislature and formally documented in the Capitol Area Plan.

- **Public Comment**

The Commission Chair strongly encouraged public comment at every meeting and urged the city's active participation in the process. On several occasions, the City of Sacramento expressed support for all of the four sites presented in this report. Mayor Jimmie Yee submitted two letters. Some historic preservationists opposed the LOB and Food & Agriculture sites, noting that they are on the California Register of Historic Resources. Two people, including Yolo County Supervisor Mike McGowan, recommended that the site selection process be expanded outside of the City of Sacramento.

The report also presents architectural space descriptions for two types of residences. The first is for a residence that includes a public museum and separate entertaining area. This proposal totals approximately 27,000 square feet, which includes a private residence of approximately 13,000 square feet and a public area of 14,000 square feet. The second proposal is for a private residence, which would total about 19,000 square feet and includes a formal reception area. Details of the two approaches are contained in the Planning and Program Guide of this report.

Because the Commission did not recommend one site in particular, it was not possible to develop a single cost estimate, funding recommendation, or development scenario. Costs for the Residence could range significantly depending on the final site selected and the scope of the architectural and space program. The Commission voted, with one member abstaining, that the Legislature should consider working with a private foundation or foundations to develop plans for the design and construction of the Governor's Residence.



The Commission has noted that it is important to select a site that will best meet the needs of all of our future Governors and their families. When we build the Residence, we are building it for everyone who may occupy its impressive space. Let us be guided by the principle that the building of the Residence should be “forever.”

